

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SAM-01

/064 W

----- 025800

P R 030900Z MAY 76

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5569

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 792

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJECT: MAY DAY IN PEKING - 1976

1. SUMMARY: FOR MAY DAY THIS YEAR, THE PRC PUT ON A DETERMINED SHOW OF

NORMALCY WHICH INCLUDED THE APPEARANCE OF ALMOST ALL OF THE MAJOR PRC LEADERS EXCEPT MAO, THE USUAL MASS GATHERINGS IN PEKING'S PARKS, AND AN EVENING DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS. HOWEVER, THE EXTRAORDINARY SECURITY MEASURES ADOPTED IN THE WAKE OF THE TIEN AN MEN RIOT AND THE SOVIET EMBASSY BOMBING, PLUS THE STRIDENT ANTI-TENG HSIAO-PING TONE OF SOME OF THE PERFORMANCES MADE THE DAY A SOMEWHAT UNEASY AND SOMBER AFFAIR. END SUMMARY.

2. LEADERSHIP TURNOUT. ALMOST ALL OF THE PHYSICALLY ABLE MEMBERS OF THE

POLITBURO, NPC STANDING COMMITTEE, AND VICE PREMIERS (WITH THE NOTABLE

EXCEPTION OF PLANNING CHIEF YU CHIU-LI) ATTENDED THE PROGRAMS IN THE CITY

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PARKS DURING THE DAY AND THE POLITBURO AGAIN TURNED OUT FOR THE EVENING

FIREWORKS DISPLAY IN THE WORKERS STADIUM.
PHOTOGRAPH OF MAO MEETING NEW ZEALAND
PRIME MINISTER WAS ON FRONT PAGE OF MAY 1 PEOPLE'S DAILY. THE OBVIOUS
INTEREST IN PRESENTING A UNITED LEADERSHIP FRONT TO THE CHINESE
POPULACE AND THE WORLD WAS UNDERLINED BY THE PHOTOGRAPH IN
THE MAY 2 PEOPLE'S DAILY SHOWING PREMIER HUA KUO-FENG FLANKED BY
CHIANG CHING AND RANKING MODERATE YEH CHIEN-YING WITH LI HSIEN-NIEN
ON CHIANG'S RIGHT AND RADICAL IDEOLOGUE YAO WEN-YUAN ON YEH'S LEFT.

3. MAJOR THEMES. THERE WAS NO PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL TO MARK THE
OCCASION BUT THE THEMES OF MANY OF THE PERFORMANCES IN THE PARKS
EMPHASIZED THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST TENG HSIAO-PING AND THE CAPITALIST
ROADERS. ANTI-TENG SONGS WERE A STANDARD PART OF THE PROGRAM AND ONE
PARTICULARLY FRIGHTENING SKIT SHOWN ON TELEVISION CLIMAXED WITH A
DETACHMENT OF MILITIA WOMEN RUNNING BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE STAGE
WITH FIMED BAYONET SHOUTING "KILL* KILL* KILL*" AS THE CHORUS
CHANTED "THE CAPITALIST ROADERS ARE STILL ON THE CAPITALIST ROAD." A
PAINTING DISPLAY HAD FULL-COLOR SCENES OF THE CRUSHING OF THE TIEN
AN MEN INCIDENT AND THE MASSIVE PARADES THAT FOLLOWED. THE
MILITIA HAD THEIR DAY ON THE STAGE, BUT THE OTHER MILITARY, INDUSTRIAL

AND SPORTS THEMES WERE HANDLED SIMILARLY TO OTHER RECENT CELEBRATIONS
OF MAY DAY AND NATIONAL DAY.

4. SECURITY HEAVY. THE MOST STRIKING FEATURE WHICH DIFFERENTIATED THIS

MAY DAY FROM RECENT SIMILAR OCCASIONS WAS THE HEAVY
SECURITY IN EVIDENCE IN THE PARKS, AT THE STADIUM, AND AROUND THE CITY.

MILITIA AND OTHER CIVILIAN SECURITY PERSONNEL WERE OUT IN HUGE NUMBERS

AND PLA CARRYING SIDEARMS WERE STRATEGICALLY PLACED THROUGHOUT THE
CROWDS. THE MASSES WERE KEPT FAR FROM THE STADIUM WHERE THE LEADERSHIP

WAS VIEWING THE FIREWORK DISPLAY AND THOSE CHINESE WITH TICKETS WHO
ENTERED THE STADIUM WITH HANDBAGS WERE SEARCHED. THERE WAS NO WAY TO
MOVE BETWEEN SECTIONS OF THE STADIUM AND A LARGE SECURITY CONTINGENT
SURROUNDED THE LEADERS. THE STREETS OF THE DOWNTOWN PART OF THE CITY
WERE ALSO HEAVILY PATROLLED.

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5. COMMENT: IN THE PAST, USLO OFFICERS HAVE NOTED THE GENERAL
LIGHTHEARTED CHARACTER OF MAY DAY AS THE MASSES OF PEKING HAVE A
FESTIVAL OF SONG AND DANCE IN THE CITY PARKS. THIS YEAR, FIREWORKS
WERE THROWN IN--THE FIRST HERE IN A YEAR AND A HALF--BUT THE AIR
SEEMED A BIT ON THE SOMBER SIDE.
THAYER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMEMMORATIVE CELEBRATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PEKING00792
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760169-0275
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760598/aaaadfqd.tel
Line Count: 112
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 MAY 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <02 SEP 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAY DAY IN PEKING - 1976
TAGS: PINT, CH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006